

WASHINGTON, DC—On April 21, 2009, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) read into the Congressional Record a statement honoring the life and career of legendary Phillies announcer Harry Kalas, who was a constituent of the 7th Congressional District.

“I rise to honor the life and accomplishments of one of the most distinctive voices in all of sports, a true baseball legend, and someone who called the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania home,” Congressman Sestak said on the Floor of the House of Representatives. “Harold Norbert ‘Harry’ Kalas, born in Naperville, Illinois, graduate of the University of Iowa, and Hall of Fame broadcaster for over 44 years, passed away on April 13, 2009, having lived a life of great distinction.

“After graduation, Harry Kalas served in the 25th Infantry Division of our United States Army in Hawaii. After his service, he began his long and honored announcing career broadcasting University of Hawaii and Hawaii Islanders games for KGU Radio.

“Harry Kalas was a member of the original Houston Astros broadcast team in 1965 and joined the Philadelphia Phillies broadcast team in 1971, sharing the booth for 26 years with his great friend and fellow Hall of Famer Richie Ashburn. Harry broadcast the opening of the Astrodome in Houston and both Veterans Stadium and Citizen Bank Ballpark in Philadelphia.

“Harry Kalas’s talents and voice were in great demand throughout his illustrious career. His many accomplishments included calling University of Houston football, Southwest Conference basketball, Big Five basketball, University of Notre Dame football, and NFL games as well as providing voice-overs for NFL films and numerous commercials.

“In 2002, Harry Kalas was the Ford C. Frick Award Winner, named after the former National League President and Major League Baseball Commissioner, and annually bestowed by the National Baseball Hall of Fame to a broadcaster for “major contributions to baseball.”

“Harry Kalas called 7 National League Championship Series and 3 World Series, most recently as the Voice of the 2008 World Champion Philadelphia Phillies.

“Harry Kalas called all of Hall of Famer Steve Carlton’s starts as a Phillie, as well as all of Hall of Famer Mike Schmidt’s 548 homeruns, making the phrase, ‘that ball is outta here,’ an often imitated, but never duplicated signature home run call known in Philadelphia and throughout the baseball world.

“Harry Kalas was named Pennsylvania Sportscaster of the year 18 times and was inducted into the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association Hall of Fame in 2008.

“Harry Kalas was a remarkable husband to his wife, Eileen, and father to his three sons, Todd, Brad, and Kane. Just this last fall, Harry Kalas had one of the greatest experiences a father could ask for when he shared broadcasting of the World Series with his son Todd. On that day Harry was the voice of the Philadelphia Phillies, and Todd, who had followed his father’s career path into broadcasting, was the voice of the Tampa Bay Rays.

“Harry Kalas was more than just a voice, he was also the finest possible husband, father, friend, and Veteran. In these challenging economic times, with a nation at war, it is important that we take the time to recognize those who dedicate their lives to making such times bearable. In this case more than bearable. Harry Kalas was one of those individuals. He will sorely be missed by Americans in every corner of this great nation. Thank you, Harry, for who you were – an inspiration to us all.”

You can watch Congressman Sestak reading his statement on the House Floor here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgjILfb4DH4>

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of “Deep Blue,” the Navy’s anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the “Global War on Terrorism.” He served as President Clinton’s Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.*

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